

CATAWBA COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN
ANNEX J
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

I. PURPOSE

This annex provides for protection of the public health during disasters which can lead to situations that would cause a need for expansion of the daily activities provided by the Catawba County Health Department, Catawba County Mental Health Agency and the Catawba County Medical Examiner.

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. Most emergency situations can lead to public health problems.
2. A well-planned health support network is essential during emergency situations.
3. Depending on the nature of the incident, complications may include general health problems, communicable disease, contamination of food and water and mental health ailments.
4. The release of toxic or hazardous materials may result in air, water or soil contamination.

B. Assumptions

1. A large-scale emergency may result in increased demands on health related personnel.
2. Many injuries, both minor and relatively severe, will be self-treated by the public.
3. Resources available through area and regional medical, health and mortuary services mutual aid agreements will be provided.
4. When local resources can no longer meet the demand of the

situation, State agencies will be contacted to provide additional resources and/or to assume control of the response.

5. Catastrophic disasters may affect large areas of the County and health resources may be damaged, destroyed, or unavailable.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATION

A. General

1. Emergency operations for public health services will be an extension of normal agency and facility duties.
2. Coordination between Health/Medical providers is necessary to ensure emergency operational readiness.

B. Health

1. The primary concern of public health is disease control. The County Department of Health will implement effective environmental health, nursing and health education practices to minimize the incidence of disease. This service is unique to the county and includes services to the municipalities.
2. Frequent inspections of damaged housing and emergency shelters will be necessary to determine the need for emergency repairs, pest control, sanitation, or other protective procedures.
3. Private water supplies may need to be inspected by the health department due to their proximity to flood areas or a hazardous materials incident. The health department will respond to requests by residents as needed in addition to identification of areas that may need mandatory inspection.
4. As incidents dictate the Director of the Catawba County Health Department will make recommendations for immunizations or other preventive measures.

C. Mental Health

1. Catawba County Mental Health Agency will coordinate activities with the Emergency Management Coordinator to provide services for the public and emergency workers.
2. Mental Health will be the key agency for coordination of Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Teams and any needed follow up.

D. Mortuary

1. The Catawba County Medical Examiner will take charge of the proper recovery of human remains.
2. Coordination with the North Carolina Medical Examiners Office will be essential in the event of mass fatalities and the need for identification and determination of cause of death. This coordination will be a co-responsibility of the Emergency Management Coordinator and the County Medical Examiner.
3. Expansion of morgue capability will be done utilizing resources from the state and the county.

IV. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

- A. Emergency public health operations will be directed from the EOC by the Health Director.
- B. The Medical Examiner will direct and control all activities connected with identification of the dead and mortuary services.
- C. The Health Director will maintain communications with their field forces and will keep the EOC informed of activities performed along with personnel and equipment needed to maintain adequate response and recovery efforts.
- D. The Mental Health Director will control activities connected with their agency and will keep the Emergency Operations Center informed of activities.

V. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT

A. Health

The line of succession is:

1. Director of Public Health
2. Nursing Supervisor
3. Enviromental Health Supervisor

B. Mortuary

The line of succession is:

1. Medical Examiner
2. Assistant Medical Examiner
3. North Carolina Medical Examiners Office